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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

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IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (28 May 68) FOR OT-RD-681190

3 June 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 17th
Combat Aviation Group, ~~Period Ending 31 January 1968~~ (U)

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11 15 Feb 68

Kenneth G. Wickham

12 62p.

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as

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 17TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP
APO San Francisco 96240

AVGD-SC

15 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDCLTO CSFOR-65 (U)

TO: See Distribution

Section I: Significant Organizational Activities.

1. (C) General

a. Mission: The 17th Combat Aviation Group provides command and control of non-divisional Army aviation assets in II Corps Tactical Zone and aviation support to IFFORCEV, DSA II CORPS, and FVMAF in support of counterinsurgency efforts in the Republic of Vietnam.

b. Organization and Structure as of 31 January 1968.

HHC, 17TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP

<u>HHC 10TH CAB</u>	<u>HHC 52D CAB</u>	<u>HHC 223D CSAB</u>
51st AHC	57th AHC	18th UAC
92d AHC	119th AHC	183d RAC
192d AHC	155th AHC	185th RAC
281st AHC	170th AHC	219th RAC
196th ASHC	179th ASHC	203d RAC
243d ASHC	189th AHC	225th SAC
	**355th HHC (-)	58th AVN DET
<u>HHC 268th CAB</u>	<u>7/17th ACS</u>	
48th AHC	A Troop Air Cav	
129th AHC	B Troop Air Cav	
134th AHC	*C Troop Air Cav	
335th AHC	D Troop Cavalry	
180th ASHC		

* C Troop detached for OPCON Americal Div
** 3 aircraft

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ACS = Air Cavalry Squadron
CAC = Aviation Company (Corps)
CAG = Combat Aviation Group
CAB = Combat Aviation Battalion
CSAB = Combat Support Aviation Battalion
RAC = Reconnaissance Airplane Company (O-1)
UAC = Utility Airplane Company (U-1A)
SAC = Surveillance Airplane Company (OV-1)
AHC = Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1)
ASHC = Assault Support Helicopter Company (CH-47)
HHC = Heavy Helicopter Company (CH-54)

c. (C) Organizational Change

(1) Operational aviation companies were reassigned during the reporting quarter as follows:

(a) 92d AHC from 268th CAB to 10th CAB and relocated from Phu Hiep to Dong Ba Thin.

(b) 117th AHC transferred to 12th CAG and relocated to Bien Hoa.

(c) 196th ASHC from 268th CAB to 10th CAB.

(d) 335th AHC from 12th CAG to 268th CAB (Phu Hiep).

(2) The following units became operational during November 1967:

- 57th AHC
- 192d AHC
- 201st CAC
- 203d RAC
- 243d ASHC
- 7/17th ACS

(3) The 16th CAG was organized and became operational 1 Jan 68. 17th CAG assets in I Corps Tactical Zone were used to form this aviation group. The following units were reassigned to 16th CAG.

14th CAB	
71st AHC	212th CSAB
161st AHC	131st SAC
174th AHC	220th RAC
176th AHC	245th SAC
178th ASHC	282d AHC

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(4) The 355th HHC was assigned 17th CAG with the main body (-) closing Jan 68. The company headquarters and first platoon consisting of three CH-54 aircraft comprised this element. The two remaining platoons are expected to arrive in country during 4th quarter FY 68. The company (-) is programmed to become operational 1 Mar 68,

d. Station List, (Inclosure 1)

2. (C) Intelligence

a. Escape and Evasion:

(1) Sufficient escape and evasion (E & E) charts, which is a soft, pliable plastic map which can also serve as an emergency shelter, and Blood Chit, which is an ID and request for help document, were received and issued to the subordinate battalions in order that each flight crewman of newly arrived units would have one in his possession.

(2) School quotas for the Navy Jungle Environment School Training (JEST), Subic/Cubic Point NAS, Philippines totaled 45 for the period. This compares to 52 for the previous period which is considered to be the minimum required to train those aviators for whom such training is intended. The E & E Officer, 1st Aviation Brigade has notified this command that quotas to the Air Force Jungle Survival School, Clark Air Force Base, Philippines will be allocated this command commencing in February 1968. These quotas will be in addition to quotas to the Navy Survival School and should be sufficient to meet the minimum requirements of the command.

b. Increased emphasis was placed on the intelligence collection effort and rapid dissemination of information at all echelons.

c. With the onset of the northeast monsoon during this period, weather was a major factor in planning operations and individual missions. However, with proper planning only a small number of sorties scheduled during the period were delayed or cancelled because of unfavorable weather conditions. On occasion low ceilings, rain and fog dictated the use of alternate flight routes and landing zones with little decrease in mission effectiveness.

3. (C) Operations and Training Activities.

a. Plans: 17th CAG headquarters and 17th CAG subordinate units provide aviation support for 8 multiaviation unit sustained operations and for continual daily company sized and smaller air mobile operations in I and II Corps Tactical Zones.

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(1) Constant surveillance of aircraft allocations is required to achieve optimum results from aviation assets. An economy of force measure is necessary due to a shortage of aviation assets in 17th CAG to support combat elements. (Rationale for aviation support has been previously reported in ORLL for quarter ending 31 Jul 67, section II Item 3. b. page 13.)

(2) Headquarters 17th CAG continues to assume a mobile posture to provide aviation support to IFFV in all contingencies.

(3) 17th CAG maintains the 10th CAB in mobile reserve to support IFFV air mobile operations which require an aviation control headquarters.

b. Operations

(1) Major Operations

<u>Operation</u>	<u>Aviation Units</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Major Units</u>
BOLLING	268th CAB 134th AHC 335th AHC 180th ASHC	12 Sep 67 - 31 Jan 68	173d Abn Bde
FRARIE FIRE	52d CAB (and assigned units)	Continual	5th SFG
MAC ARTHUR	52d CAB 57th AHC 119th AHC 170th AHC 189th AHC 179th ASHC (Reinforced by 180th ASHC and 196th ASHC) 219th RAC	12 Oct 67 - 31 Jan 68	4th Inf Div II Corps (ARVN)
SULTON (DELTA)	281st AHC 219th RAC	10 Dec 67 - 31 Jan 68	5th SFG
KLAMATH FALLS	10th CAB 119th AHC 92d AHC 243d ASHC	1 Dec 67 - 8 Jan 68	1/101st Abn Bde

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<u>Operation</u>	<u>Aviation Units</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Major Units</u>
MAENG HO 9	266th CAB 61st AHC 129th AHC 196th ASHC 192d AHC	17 Dec 67 - 30 Jan 68	Capitol ROK Inf Div (CRID)
AMERICAL	14th CAB (and attached units)	15 Oct 67 - 1 Jan 68	Americal Div
MC CLAIN	192d AHC 243d ASHC (-)	19-31 Jan 68	3/506th Abn
WALKER	61st AHC (-) 196th AHC (-)	17-31 Jan 68	4/503d ABN

(2) Significant Operational Events 25-31 Jan 1968.

(a) The 1968 TET holiday brought a new phase to the Vietnam counterinsurgent effort. The VC/NVA launched offensive actions against Vietnamese cities and FVMAF installations. Primary military targets in II Corps were Army Aviation Units. Simultaneous attacks were launched during early morning hours of 30 Jan 68 transforming what was supposed to be the beginning of a 72 hour truce into a major enemy offensive. Kontum, Holloway and Ban Me Thuot were strongly attacked by ground forces supported by mortar and rockets. Sappers successfully entered the aircraft parking area at Dong Ba Thin (10th CAB, 92d AHC) and damaged or destroyed eight UH-1H aircraft.

(b) The attacks in the highlands although strongly supported with mortars and rockets failed to penetrate the perimeter of any 17th CAG installations. Specifics of each action will be covered in detail in the ORLL of the 52d CAB. 17th CAG units in each area were able to withstand the attack and continue to provide air mobile and gun ship support to combat units in their respective area, but at a reduced rate indicated by the drop in flying hours. The availability of aircraft proved to be a limiting factor in the assuming of the offensive by FVMAF and ARVN combat elements. The lack of security or assistance from combat units materially affected the capability of aviation units to support combat operations.

(c) Aircraft losses during the period 25-31 Jan 68.

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1. Aircraft destroyed

UH-1C (5)
UH-1H (2)
OH-6A (1)

2. Aircraft damaged (in excess of 7 days required for repair.)

UH-1C (5)
UH-1H (21)
OH-6A (1)

(d) The above losses reflects only the initial attacks since the enemy offensive continues past the reporting period. Aircraft availability was significantly affected.

(e) 17th CAG played a major role in the defense against the enemy attack and the successful pursuit after the attack was repelled. The gunships were instrumental in breaking this attack. Enemy carelessly exposed themselves and courageous gunship crewmen made pass after pass, each time killing enemy by the scores. LTG Vien Loc, II Corps Commander has recommended the 52d CAB and attached units for the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry for their dramatic role in the Highlands during this crucial period.

(f) Coastal units were similarly engaged. The 10th CAB and 268th CAB with assigned units supported US, ROK, and ARVN counter-operations in Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, Nha Trang, Phan Thiet, and Dalat. The 129th AHC accounted for 168 NVA/VC KBA in a single day, operation in conjunction with the capital ROK Infantry Division (CRID) operations in the Qui Nhon (Binh Dinh) region.

(g) Situation continued past the Reporting Period. Results will be reported in ORLL for Quarterly Period ending 31 April 68.

(3) Quarterly operational data. (Inclosure 2)

c. Training:

(1) During the reporting period the number of personnel attending in country AAMTAP Schools were:

UH-1 Airframe:	
UH-1B & C -	17
UH-1D -	13
OH-6A Airframe & Engine:	4
OH-47 Airframe:	20
T-53 Engine:	12
T-53 - (L-13) Engine:	21
T-55 Engine:	24
Avionics & Aircraft Supply:	14

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(2) Replacement Training:

(a) Replacements for all 17th CAG units are assigned through Group Headquarters at Nha Trang. This afforded an excellent opportunity to consolidate mandatory replacement training as required by USARV Reg 350-1. Training was initiated on 11 Dec 67 with one combat veteran instructor and has progressed into a highly effective initial orientation for all replacements. Subjects covered are as follows:

- Orientation on VC Tactics and Techniques.
- Mines and Booby Traps
- Care and Cleaning of M-16 Rifle.
- Security and Sentry Duty
- Survival
- Convoy procedures.
- Geneva Convention, PW & Detainee Handling.
- Weapons and Driver Safety.
- Military Justice and Code of Conduct
- Psy Warfare.

(b) These subjects being covered at Group has taken a considerable work load off of the Battalions and Companies. Therefore more time is available for aviator and crew training at unit level.

4. (C) Logistics:

a. Aircraft availability rate for 17th CAG was 73.7%; average EDP rate was 9.2% and EDM made up the remaining 17.1% of downtime. This compares unfavorably with the Group's rates for the previous period. (81.4% available, 5.3% EDP, and 13.3% EDM). There are four primary or general reasons for the decline in availability:

(1) CH-47 twelfth periodic inspection requirements have taxed the maintenance manhours resources of CH-47 units to the limit. Even though only one CH-47 unit was involved in these inspections at the close of the quarter, the reduced performance by that unit has resulted in heavy commitment of other unit's assets to complete the mission. This additional commitment has seldom been accompanied by any reduction in other mission areas. The support maintenance battalion (14th Trans Bn (AM&S)) has also expended its maximum effort to reduce operational unit workloads. The assistance provided by this battalion has been invaluable.

(2) The 17th CAG has experienced more combat damage during this period than ever before in its history. Repairing this damage has contributed to increased EDM rates.

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(3) Aircraft shortages have increased virtually across the board. The decreased capability has not been accompanied by reduced requirements. Approximately the same number of hours have been flown on fewer aircraft. This has resulted in more maintenance being required due to reduction in management capability, i.e. spreading the time among more aircraft. In many cases maintenance has been deferred as long as possible, but this is also a self-defeating effort because the longer the maintenance is deferred, the more work that is required to repair a given condition.

(4) Reduced supply support shows unquestionably in increased EDP rate. This increase in EDP rates also produces a resulting hidden increase in EDM rate in that fewer parts results in more cannibalization. This in turn puts more demand on already stretched maintenance manpower capability.

b. During the reporting quarter, 284 aircraft transfer transactions took place. These transactions were the result of crash and combat damage turn-ins, turn-ins for excessive maintenance requirements and very limited support of reduced modernization programs. Two aircraft infusion programs also contributed to this total which is an increase of 86 transfer transactions over the previous quarter's 198 transfers. One of these infusions was required to balance unit assets, among newly arrived full-strength units and older units which had not received replacements for lost aircraft. The other program was completed to provide low time CH-47's to older units and to establish an immediate time spread to a new unit with all low time aircraft. Twelve CH-47's and five OH-47 units were involved in this move.

5. (U) Civic Action

a. Medical Service

(1) An active Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) throughout 17th Aviation Group spent \$2,150.00 during last quarter.

(2) The Group Headquarters dentist treats 10 - 15 Vietnamese orphans per week during his off duty time.

(3) MEDCAP includes treatment of acute and chronic illness and immunization against common diseases as well as instruction in the use of soap and water and proper disposal of wastes.

b. Religious Activities.

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(1) One Sunday each month donation from the Chapel offering is given to the Christian Servicemen's Center, which serves all military personnel in the Nha Trang area.

(2) A donation of 35,000-\$ VN (estimate) was presented to the Evangelical Clinic (VNCS - sponsored) for construction of a kitchen to be utilized by families of clinic patients. At present the roof for the kitchen is nearing completion.

6. (C) Personnel:

a. Command Relationship:

(1) Colonel Bill G. Smith, Infantry, commanded the 17th CAG throughout this reporting period.

(2) Changes of command.

(a) On 2 Jan 68, LTC Marion F. England assumed command of the 10th CAB vice LTC Eugene F. Crooks.

(b) On 5 Jan 68, LTC Donald E. Mulligan assumed command of the 268th CAB vice LTC Harry W. Townsend.

(3) On 1 Jan 68 the 14th CAB and the 212th CAB were relieved from the 17th CAG and assigned to the 16th CAG by 1st Aviation Brigade General Order Number 77.

b. 17th CAG personnel strength as of 31 January 1968:

STRENGTH AUTH/ASGD AS OF 31 JANUARY 1968

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Commissioned</u>	<u>Warrant Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
Hq, 17th CAG	18/36	2/6	66/180
10th CAB	116/124	270/196	1493/1479
52d CAB	140/122	313/285	1819/1638
223d CSAB	193/184	67/40	957/881
268th CAB	106/95	241/173	1280/1181
*7/17th ACS	60/61	65/55	560/645
201st Corps Avn Co	8/12	18/12	89/90
TOTAL	641/634	977/767	6264/6094

*C Troop attached to 14th CAB for strength accountability

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On 1 Jan 68 the personnel strength of the 14th CAB and the 212th CSAB was relieved from the 17th CAG and assigned to the 16th CAG.

STRENGTH AUTH/ASGD AS OF 1 JAN 68

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Commissioned</u>	<u>Warrant Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
*14th CAB	118/82	275/197	1409/1202
212th CSAB	<u>135/134</u>	<u>84/59</u>	<u>1032/924</u>
TOTAL	253/216	359/256	2441/2126

*C Troop personnel strength is included in 14th CAB

c. The 17th CAG is authorized 90% manning level of aviators.

AVIATOR STRENGTH MANNING LEVEL/ASGD AS OF 31 JAN 68.

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Commissioned</u>	<u>Warrant Officers</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Hq, 17th CAG	20/22	0/5	20/27
10th CAB	96/108	226/183	322/291
52d CAB	102/89	254/251	356/340
223d CSAB	167/162	35/36	202/198
268th CAB	80/73	188/154	268/227
7/17th ACE	61/62	85/75	146/137
201st Avn Co (Corps)	<u>6/10</u>	<u>17/12</u>	<u>23/22</u>
TOTAL	532/526	805/716	1337/1242

d. Personnel Statistics. (See Incl 3 and 4)

7. (U) Flight Safety

a. Period 1 November 1967 - 31 January 1968:

	<u>RW</u>	<u>FW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Major Accidents	41	5	46
Minor Accidents	4	2	6
Combat Losses	54	2	56
Incidents	56	2	58
Forced Landings	17	0	17
Precautionary Landings	31	11	42

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b. Aircraft Accidents:

	<u>RW</u>	<u>FW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RATE</u>	<u>FATAL</u>
November	14	3	17	36.2	1
December	17	1	18	26.5	17
January	14	2	16	31.0	13

c. Combat Attrition:

	<u>RW</u>	<u>FW</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>RATE</u>	<u>FATAL</u>
November	23	1	24	N/A	8
December	19	1	20	N/A	6
January	12	0	12	N/A	3

d. Incidents:

	<u>F/L:</u>		<u>P/L:</u>	
	<u>RW</u>	<u>FW</u>	<u>RW</u>	<u>FW</u>
November	10	1	8	0
December	18	0	6	0
January	28	1	3	0

e. Cumulative accident rate per 100,000 hours flying time
during period: 29.2; during FY 1968: 30.5.

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Section II: Commander's Observations and Recommendations

Part 1. Observations (Lessons Learned)

1. (C) Personnel

a. ITEM: Personnel Shortages.

Discussion: Shortages of key enlisted personnel with critical MOS's has continued to be of concern. Maintenance personnel with 68 series, 45J, 67W and 31B training were especially lacking. The shortage of these personnel were magnified by the limited number authorized to each unit. Additionally, the slow input of CH-54 experienced 67W and OH-6A personnel has impacted heavily on this unit.

Observation: Programming for skilled personnel in new aircraft and associated equipment introduced into Vietnam is essential. Although extensions have assisted this problem in the past, the reduced promotion allocations and increased number of new aircraft with equipment will quickly degrade an already difficult condition.

b. ITEM: Commissioned Officer/Warrant Officer Ratio.

Discussion: The Commissioned to Warrant Officer ratio continued to align itself with the programmed 40%/60% ratio. Throughout the period, however, there was a lack of junior officers available for platoon command responsibilities within the assault helicopter companies. This was prompted by a large percentage of company grade officers being rated in fixed wing aircraft only.

Observation: The large ratio of company grade officers arriving in this command who are not rotary wing rated has caused a serious lack of this commissioned leadership at the assault helicopter unit level. With the accelerated promotion system as it is, initial entry commissioned aviators will have to possess a rotary rating if adequate numbers of these aviators are to be available as needed.

c. ITEM: Experienced aviators.

Discussion: A noticeable lack of flying experience within the platoons of assault helicopter companies has been prevalent. A major contributing factor has been the more critical qualifications possessed by the most experienced aviators; ie, OV-1, CH-47, AH-1G and CH-54 ratings, and therefore assignment to units possessing these aircraft. Additionally, higher staff positions consistently require the most knowledgeable personnel.

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Observation: New aviators have quickly gained experience after arrival incountry; however, any further decline in mature, experienced aviator input to assault helicopter companies will adversely effect the successful mission accomplishment of these units.

2. (C) Operations

a. ITEM: Army Aircraft Hit By Ground Fire

Discussion: 17th CAG conducted a comprehensive study of aircraft hit by ground fire during a six month period (Inclosure 5). This study inquired into all areas of tactics, weather conditions, and methods of flying. Results of this study are being studied by 1st Aviation Brigade to determine any significant changes in enemy capabilities air tactics.

Observation: That techniques, tactics and enemy capability must be continually analyzed and flying patterns be constantly varied to reduce aircraft hits.

+b. ITEM: (C) Security of 17th CAG Airfields in II Corps Tactical Zones.

Discussion: Enemy attacks on the lightly defended airfields of Kontum and Ban Me Thuot during 29-31 Jan 68 reiterates the inability for an aviation unit to provide for its own defense and still provide aviation support on an extended basis. Both locations are occupied by aviation companies without augmentation of other US units. Reinforcement or augmentation of these unit's defense has been the responsibility of the Senior US advisor in the area of Operation. The 57th Assault Helicopter Company came under heavy attack and for several days made an outstanding account in the defense of the airfield. The perimeter was never penetrated and several hundred enemy KBA resulted from futile attempts to overrun the airfield. In spite of the successful airfield defense, the unit was almost ineffective during this attack and for several days thereafter. The unit was simply unable to perform maintenance, repair damaged aircraft and fight off the enemy simultaneously.

Observation: If aviation units are to provide continual aviation support throughout all phases of combat operations, security must be provided by combat units.

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c. ITEM: Night Helicopter Operations

Discussion: Night helicopter operations are frequently conducted under marginal weather conditions at night. Often as not they are purely administrative in nature and could have been rescheduled to allow the flight to return to point of origin under favorable daylight hours. To reduce the incidence of marginal flights and to allow the aircraft to return to base camp for maintenance during daylight hours the Commanding General IFFORCEV has published guidance to the supported units. (Incl 6)

Observation: The policy change for administrative flights has proven to be effective and has enhanced 17th CAG helicopter operations.

d. ITEM: Helicopter Support of ROK Operations.

Discussion: The education process is playing an important role with KOREAN FORCES supported by 17th CAG. ROK Commanders continually emphasize the importance of helicopter utilization. The inclosed letter of instruction (Incl 7) was published by ROKFVFC to all subordinate units. ROK units have been extremely receptive to recommendations and constructive criticism from 17th CAG commanders and Division Liaison Officers.

Observation: ROK utilization of Aviation has continued to improve and is considered highly effective.

* 3. (C) Training and organization.

a. Training

(1) ITEM: Dropped Loads

Discussion: The dropping of external sling loads continues to be a problem associated with CH-47 operations. Although statistics are not readily available, a review of Dropped Load Reports for the previous quarter indicates faulty equipment and improperly rigged loads being prevalent. During this quarter, units were instructed to send contact teams out to supported units for the purpose of providing these units training in the care and maintenance of sling equipment, use of sling equipment, and the proper method of rigging loads.

Observation: The effectiveness of the contact teams is evident by the immediate reduction in the number of dropped loads due to faulty equipment and improperly rigged loads. Continued emphasis must be placed on training and supervision of rigging for sling load operations.

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(2) ITEM: Qualification of Chinook Mechanics, MOS 67U20, 67U30.

DISCUSSION:

(a) A great deal of discussion and correspondence has been expended over the qualifications of school trained CH-47 mechanics. Without fail, maintenance officers unanimously concur in the fact that at least 6 weeks to two months OJT in a unit is required to turn a school trained CH-47 mechanic into a passable useful mechanic.

(b) In the past three months, two CH-47 units assigned to this Group have had the assistance of the mobile Vertol AMTAP Team for on-site OJT. In both instances mission ready availability rates have shown significant improvement almost from the exact date of the team's arrival on site. In both units, mission ready rates were a problem; the team arrived and availability went up to a better than average level. The team is still on-site at one unit, however, when the team departed the first unit, availability declined for about a month and is now rising again, back to the average level. (Every effort will be made to preclude a decline in availability with the team's departure from the second unit.)

OBSERVATION:

(a) The Chinook maintenance officers' claims of untrained mechanics are valid. When even three well-experienced mechanics (the Vertol team) are available, availability rates show significant increases. It can be concluded that very few Army mechanics are actually qualified to maintain the Chinook. Extending this conclusion, it appears that few maintenance supervisors and, to a lesser degree, maintenance officers, are actually qualified to maintain this complex aircraft.

(b) The situation is further compounded by the one year rotation policy. By the time a mechanic, supervisor or maintenance officer begins to grasp the intricacies of the aircraft, he rotates. The few assignments available in CONUS which would permit this experience to be further developed are insufficient to assure continuity of the experience gaining process. The result is that the majority of CH-47 maintenance personnel work on Chinooks during tours in RVN and the Army, therefore, continues to suffer from a severe lack of experience on this aircraft.

(c) The problem might be solved by upgrading the CH-47 TOE if sufficient experienced personnel are available to train in the CH-47. The present system of training first-term soldiers to maintain the CH-47 is unsatisfactory. Stringent qualification should be established for MOS 67U20 and 67U30 trainee inputs, i.e. 3 years aircraft maintenance experience, grade E-5 or higher, retainability of at least 3 years, high mechanical aptitude scores, and a demonstrated willingness and ability to work long, hard hours.

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These prerequisites once established, should be strictly adhered to. A definite career pattern should be developed to assure continuity of this effort and should offer maximum advancement potential.

(d) In addition to closely controlling the caliber of trainee, CH-47 maintenance courses should be lengthened and should include a maximum amount of practical work.

(e) If maximum benefit is to be derived from this expensive equipment, the caliber of people maintaining the equipment must be drastically improved. The present mechanics provided by the Army school system are barely satisfactory. (This item was sent to subordinate battalions for comments prior to submission. Comments provided by 10th and 14th Combat Aviation Battalions are contained in Inclosure 8.)

b. ITEM: Implementation of Approved TOE's Specifically TOE 1-258G, and TOE 55-570G.

Discussion: TOE 1-258G, Aviation Medium Helicopter Company, has been approved by DA, and is dated Sep 66. TOE 55-570G, Aircraft Maintenance Teams, is dated Oct 67, and supersedes TOE 55-500R. Implementation of both TOE's for selected units would greatly enhance the maintenance capability of those units. The CH-47 TOE, 1-258G, for example, authorizes an additional 69 maintenance skilled personnel when compared to the present TOE, 1-258F. This increase is largely in the hard-skill area of 67U type personnel as shown below:

<u>MOS</u>	<u>GR</u>	<u>TOE 1-258F. QTY</u>	<u>TOE 1-258G. QTY</u>	<u>RECAP</u>
67U20	E - 6	17	16	-1
	E - 5	18	46	+28
	E - 4	18	46	+28
67U40	E - 7	5	3	-2
	E - 6	0	2	+2
	E - 5	1	0	-1
67W20	E - 6	1	2	+1
67A10	E - 3	10	24	+14
35K20	E - 5	4	2	-2
	E - 4	0	2	+2
		<u>74</u>	<u>143</u>	<u>+69</u>

TOE 55-570G provides for various sized teams to be tailored to meet the particular requirements of a supported unit. Application of this TOE within 17th CAG to the 7/17th CAV SQDN and to the 201st Corps Avn Co would greatly enhance the operation of those units.

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Observation:

(1) Both ACTIV Study No ACL-7F, US Army Aircraft Supply and Maintenance in Vietnam (U), dated 19 Sep 67 and USARPAC Army Aviation Safety Survey in Vietnam dated 6 Oct 67, recognized that the maintenance capability in RVN is being extended to its limits. The long hours being worked by the mechanics in all types of aviation units results in loss of efficiency and compromise, to some degree, of quality and safety standards. This impact is being felt to a very large degree in CH-47 units which are now beginning to encounter the heavy workload that is generated by the 12th periodic inspection requirements on the CH-47. This workload, further increased by consistent over flight of the established flying hour program in RVN, has made it necessary to evacuate several CH-47's to back up support units.

(2) The ACTIV study referenced above evaluated the performance of units organized under TOE's of the ROAD Division, the Airmobile Division, and non-divisional aviation units which are provided third-echelon support by attached detachments. The study's primary conclusion and recommendation was that the non-divisional concept of aircraft maintenance, which calls for attachment of cellular direct support maintenance units directly to aviation operating units, is superior to both ROAD and Airmobile division support concepts.

4. (C) Intelligence

a. ITEM: Visual Reconnaissance Program

Discussion: During the reporting period, there were 17,922 hours flown exclusively for Visual Reconnaissance out of a total of 25,120 hours flown for all missions. The previous period showed 12,785 hours flown for Visual Reconnaissance out of a total hours of 17,216. This is an increase of 5,137 hours for Visual Reconnaissance and an increase of 7,904 in total hours. This increase is due to the arrival of another Reconnaissance Airplane Company with twentyfour (24) O-1's in the II Corps Tactical Zone and increased requirements during the cease fire periods. The percent of total hours devoted to Visual Reconnaissance during the period was 72%, a decrease of 2% from the previous period.

Observation: Due to increased requirements for O-1s by the US Forces for surveillance of areas of operations, radio relay and artillery adjustment and the diversion of O-1 Aircraft from the Visual

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Reconnaissance Program to meet these requirements, the effectiveness of this extremely important program has not been significantly increased with the arrival of the additional Reconnaissance Airplane Company in the II Corp Tactical Zone.

5. (C) Logistics

a. ITEM: Basic Loads of Class I, III, and V

Discussion:

(1) The amount of basic loads for Class I, V and stockage objectives for Class III should be reviewed. On hand supplies should be sufficient to sustain the unit for at least a three day period. However, certain locations which are resupplied primarily by air, found themselves down to less than one day of supplies on hand before resupply was accomplished. When supplies become this critical consideration should be given to increasing the stockage level. An increase of stockage levels is necessary in order to overcome possible delays caused by bad weather and increased enemy activity throughout the zone that may tie up all available transportation for higher priority supplies. It was observed that many units were asking for emergency resupply as early as 12 hours after contact had been made because they were down to a one day supply level.

(2) Also noted was a 200% over consumption for certain ASR controlled ammunition. Most of this ammunition had been on the controlled list in small quantities for several months. However, the units did not draw the ammunition authorized. The units started drawing large quantities of ammunition the first day after contact was made. This indicates that possibly the units had underestimated their daily requirements and only had small quantities on hand.

Observation: That all commanders should take this opportunity to review all stockage levels. Close consideration should be given to the location, how the unit is supplied, and what would be the ample time before resupply could be accomplished in the event of enemy contact at their location.

b. ITEM: Transportation of Critical Supplies

Discussion: During the latter part of this period the inter RVN airlift capability ground to a halt. Emergency resupply, which normally moves within two hours, was requiring 36 hours. This was brought about by the large demand for resupply which could only be accomplished by airlift. Because these supplies were badly needed, another mode of transportation was required.

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Observation: These supplies could be moved by organic CH-47's. This has been accomplished by close coordination with the S-3 section on a daily basis. Each day there are CH-47's which would move from one location to another without loads. By this coordination we were able to move supplies in less time and obtain better utilization of aircraft by having cargo for them rather than making flights empty.

c. ITEM: Food Conservation

Discussion: Food Conservation is one of the basic and continuing objectives of mess operation within the 17th CAG. It is a critical part of efficient mess management. Effective conservation at the mess level requires the cooperation of unit commanders, mess officers, mess stewards and unit cooks. Correct execution of mess accounting forms will enable the mess steward to eliminate waste.

Observation: Commanders of all units should insure the proper and economical utilization of subsistence in all messes.

d. ITEM: Aircraft Maintenance Equipment Requirements.

Discussion:

(1) A basic requirement in Vietnam exists for more and better aircraft lighting sets. Ideally, a system to provide bright, diffused lighting capability, with a self-contained generator, should be provided. This system should be constructed to shine light from above, to prevent glare inasmuch as possible, and should have sufficient height to be used for CH-47 main rotor hub and engine work. The lighting set used commonly by the USAF, with telescoping spot lights on each end, is a definite improvement over Army provided lights, but is not the ultimate equipment available by any means.

(2) The use of minor-type helmet-mounted lighting systems to augment any other lights available might be beneficial.

(3) Development of a "line" sheet metal repair wagon, to be either self-propelled or towed, would be extremely beneficial to aircraft maintenance units. This wagon (or whatever it's called) would be equipped with generator, air compressor, a small sheet metal brake, and flexible lights, and would have storage space for rivets, sheet aluminum, rivet guns, drills, and other components. A drill press and small grinder would also enhance the flexibility offered by addition of a wagon of this type to a unit's maintenance capability.

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(4) Other equipment requirements are included in ACTIV Study ACL-7F, US Army Aircraft Supply and Maintenance in Vietnam, dated 19 Sep 67.

Observation: The Army operates with equipment which is designed primarily for field use and is often hindered in any operation, other than the field, by the lack sophistication of equipment. Ruggedness and simplicity are desirable characteristics in any equipment; however, in the base camp environment which aircraft are operated and maintained from in Vietnam, trade-off of these characteristics in favor of a certain degree of sophistication is desirable.

e. ITEM: Lack of Aircraft Maintenance Facilities

Discussion:

(1) The northern area traditionally suffers from more severe monsoon seasons than the III and IV CTZ's, yet primary construction effort seems to have been directed to those zones. Further, ROAD divisions which largely obtain lower availability and utilization factors than 17th CAG units, seem to have construction priority.

(2) The Tailored Inspection Maintenance System (TIMS), which is being considered for implementation in RVN, requires that aircraft be hangared for three types of inspection if possible. These inspections are more crucial under TIMS because they allow increased interval between certain inspection.

(3) Morale and efficiency of maintenance personnel would be greatly improved if permanent hangars were available.

Observation: In the I and II CTZ's of RVN, aircraft maintenance hangars are all-too-scarce. Permanent hangars are available, in fact, to only two UH-1 units in Pleiku, one UH-1 unit in Da Nang, one CH-47 unit in Phu Hiep, one U-1A unit in Qui Nhon, and one O-1 and OV-1 unit in Hue Phu Bai. There are a total of thirty-five company sized aviation units now assigned to this area. Those units without permanent hangars available operate from TOE-provided shelters or in the open.

f. ITEM: Misuse of MILSTRIP (AR 725-10) Issue Priority Designators throughout Aircraft Technical Supply Channels.

Discussion:

(1) If the MILSTRIP system is to be made valid a great deal of re-education and large scale changes to long standing

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procedures will be required. This Headquarters suggests that strong consideration be given to the following changes to present practices. It is felt that if these actions are implemented and incorporated with reasonable improvements in the communication and transportation systems, MILSTRIP can be established as an actual priority issue system.

(2) The probable sequence of events to revalidate the priority system would begin with a thorough review of AR 725-50 and AR 711-16 and would result in rewriting of USARV Regulations as required. Revisions in policies would include very well defined definitions for uses for each of the issue priority designators used in this command. For example, O2 requisitions should be used only for EDP parts. Requisitions under O5 IPD's would be for forecast parts requirements only and would be required to indicate a reasonable required delivery date; IPD 12 and 17 requisitions would be used to requisition parts against a specific serial numbered end item and to order only stock replenishment parts, respectively. Each O2 requisition would be required to indicate the aircraft serial number the part is required against and to show the requisition number of the oldest replenishment requisition submitted for the part, if the part is for an ASL item. Consideration should be given to establishing an "O2W" priority (as O2RDD requisitions are now established) to indicate EDP-work-stoppage parts requirements. Parts requisitioned using their priority would be limited to three, or five, line items per aircraft.

(3) These revisions to basic policies would require time to implement. One way of accomplishing these major changes would begin with an arbitrary cancellation of all requisitions, followed by a 5-7 day moratorium on requisitions during which time only "fill or kill" EDP support would be provided by DSU's. During the moratorium three things should happen:

(a) DSU and depot computers should be re-programmed to provide safeguards against violations to the above priority definitions.

(b) Each unit should be visited, the document register studied to determine that units requisitioning policies, and the differences explained between past individual unit policies and the new priority definitions.

(c) DSU and depot stock should be accurately inventoried on a crash basis.

Observation:

(1) The validity of assigned requisitioning priorities has become increasingly questionable due to misuse of the priorities at all levels.

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(2) A survey of five units of this command has revealed that, though an effort is made by newly arriving units to comply with standard priority usage, slow reaction to low priority requirements may result in eventual abandonment of these priorities and increased reliance on high priority requisitions to obtain required parts. In addition, the highest priority has been "watered-down" from application to only EDP requirements to include forecast requirements using a required Delivery Date (RDD). EDP requisitions, priority 02 and RDD requisitions, also priority 02, have a special code applied to the transceived card. Some units have discovered that a requisition submitted on priority 02, without the special code denoting EDP or RDD requisitions, will be accepted by DSU's and the Saigon depot. These units, using this system, receive parts before other units using accepted practices, thus further inflating the priority system.

g. ITEM: Management of Aircraft Armament Systems

Discussion:

(1) Once the aircraft is received, the clamor begins, with the unit concerned searching all possible sources to locate a complete weapons system to be installed on their aircraft. When a system is located, the unit must often go up through command channels, through battalion, group, and brigade, to USARV, to obtain clearance to have the system installed on their aircraft. USARV then usually approves these installations, and so notifies 1st Avn Bde, which passes the notification back down channels to the unit. USARV also notifies the 34th GS Gp Armament section, who notifies the 58th Trans Bn (AMMC) if the weapons system is in depot stocks. The system is then shipped to the direct support maintenance unit which installs the weapons system on the operating unit's aircraft. (Shipment of these systems from the 58th Bn to a northern DSU cannot be expected to take less than one week.) If the weapons system located by the operating unit is on hand in a direct support unit, the 34th Gp Armament section, after receipt of the USARV release, notifies the 14th Trans Bn (AM&S) Armament Officer (for northern units) who in turn passes installation instructions to the direct support maintenance unit concerned.

(2) This situation is complicated by the fact that each type of weapons system is comprised of two modification kits, the kit including the electrical wiring components and the kit including the actual armament components and hardware. Often, an aircraft will be wired for an M-5 weapons system and will be issued to a unit which already has their

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two authorized M-5 Systems, but which is short an M-21 system. In these cases, if an M-21 kit is available, the wiring for the M-5 system may or may not be removed prior to the M-21 wiring kit and armament kit being installed.

(3) Shortages of a particular type kit (for example, a severe shortage of M-21 modification kit seems to be apparent now) results in gunships being issued to units in an indiscriminate manner. One unit in 17th CAG has two M-21 gunships, two M-3/M-5 gunships, one M-5 only gunship, and one gunship (UH-1C) without any weapons system installed, assigned against an authorization of six M-21 gunships and two M-3/M-5 gunships. Tactical employment of this armed platoon is obviously limited. While this is an extreme example of non-standard assignment of weapons systems, there are other less alarming mixings of the basic authorization of the six and two combination.

(4) The problem is further complicated by the operating unit's natural reluctance (under the above conditions) to turn in servicable weapons systems or components from crash or combat damaged aircraft, even in those units which understand the armament turn-in system. This system has recently been revised, by 34th GS Gp message AVGF-XM GS-12-63; these streamlined procedures should improve the turn-in notification system. Major overall armament program policy changes are required, however, to combat hoarding tendencies.

Observation: Replacement of UH-1 gunships lost to attrition or modernization is often a time-consuming, frustrating process. The system now being used sometimes results in an aircraft being issued to a unit without a weapons system installed.

h. ITEM: UH-1 Tail Rotor Hub Inspection

Discussion:

(1) Any components which requires as detailed an inspection as the UH-1 tail rotor, at such a low interval, is not satisfactory for field use. The tail rotor should be subjected to a close engineering reappraisal to determine what modifications are required to improve component reliability.

(2) It is unfortunate that inspection equipment below GS level can not perform a satisfactory inspection of the tail rotor. Normally the closer the inspection capability is to the user, the more rapid the inspection will be completed, but in this case, equipping even DS units to perform this inspection would be prohibitive due to equipment cost.

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(3) The direct exchange program on tail rotor hubs is the most feasible immediate solution to the problem. While temporary shortages in individual DS units can not be avoided, every effort should continue to be made to eliminate these shortages.

Observation: UH-1 tail rotor hubs must be removed every 100 hours and turned in to direct support maintenance companies for evacuation to general support maintenance companies, where they're subjected to magnetic particle or ultra-sonic tests. Though a direct exchange of tail rotor hubs at DS maintenance units is, in theory, approved and practiced, shortages of tail rotor hubs has sometimes resulted in aircraft being grounded solely for tail rotors.

1. ITEM: Configuration Control Program for Aircraft Modifications

Discussion:

(1) Emphasis through technical channels on aircraft configuration control, however, is increasing. The administrative effort alone required to review and update machine run listings of aircraft, those MWOs which have been applied, and those MWOs which are outstanding, is somewhat staggering. This trend toward the sophisticated, the nice-to-have, must be reversed, or minimized, to allow mechanics at unit level to concentrate on normal mission availability requirements.

(2) It is recognized that certain MWOs are urgent, in that they affect safety of flight or reliability of certain major critical components. These absolutely essential requirements constitute a very minor percentage of the approved MWOs however. The vast majority of the MWOs can easily be deferred without detrimental effect on aircraft operation. Elimination of these requirements for aircraft assigned in RVN should be complete. Units should be required to review a monthly, or preferably, quarterly machine listing of assigned aircraft against only essential MWOs and safety of flight inspection requirements. All other MWO's would be ignored until the aircraft is returned to CONUS.

(3) Upon arrival in CONUS, aircraft and records inspection would quickly determine which MWO's should be applied to bring aircraft to CONUS garrison standards.

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Observation: Both ACTIV Study No ACL-7F, US Army Aircraft Supply and Maintenance in Vietnam (U), dated 19 Sep 67, and USARPAC Army Aviation Safety Survey in Vietnam, dated 6 Oct 67, recognized the shortage of maintenance manpower in Vietnam. Unit maintenance officers and maintenance detachment commanders feel these shortages acutely. The workload generated by constant overflight of the prescribed DA flying hour program is compounded by periodic parts shortages which result in cannibalization between aircraft to keep the maximum number of aircraft flyable and mission ready. Available manpower resources are now being stretched even further (presumably at least partially as a result of the ACTIV study) due to the emphasis that's being placed on application of modification work orders (MWOs). This emphasis has thus far come primarily through technical channels. Of the two types of aircraft primarily used in 1st Avn Bde (and in Vietnam), the UH-1 and the CH-47, there have been about 300 modifications published-about 102 UH-1 MWOs and 198 CH-47 MWOs. These totals do not necessarily include one-time inspection and modification requirements. The requirement to apply all outstanding MWOs to all aircraft would require innumerable manhours - and, indeed, this action is not anticipated, nor could it be accomplished, in Vietnam.

j. ITEM: Establishment of Quality Assurance Teams at Combat Aviation Group Level.

Discussion:

(1) Each individual filling a Group maintenance officer's position must recognize early in his assignment which areas of his responsibility he will devote the most attention to, and which areas may be sacrificed to battalion or subordinate responsibility. There is simply not enough time to analyze in sufficient detail, and to implement corrective measures to all the problems encountered concerning all areas of this responsibility, particularly in a group with over four battalions assigned.

(2) The most promising method to improve the group maintenance officer's accomplishment of his responsibilities is to assign a Quality Assurance Team to the group maintenance section, subordinate to the maintenance officer. This team would ideally be comprised of a senior captain or major, two warrant officers, one maintenance and one technical supply oriented, an aircraft maintenance supervisor, NCO E-8, two technical inspectors, 67W20, SP6 (with at least one cross-qualified in fixed wing technical inspection and the other armament maintenance trained) and a technical supply sergeant SSG E-6, MOS 76T40.

(3) This combination Quality Assurance, trouble-shooting team would be employed in several ways. The primary function of the team would be to make unannounced assistance visits to units of the

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command for the purpose of determining, through conduct of a semi formal inspection, the actual status of a unit, their aircraft, maintenance standards, compliance with regulations and policies, management performance and capability, aircraft publications and records status, supply status, personnel status and strengths and weaknesses, and the status of the units' training program. Only an informal record of this type visit should be kept; no command channel report should be required.

(4) Aircraft inspections could be on a random sampling (5-10%) basis, or, for example, the team could (after determining the anticipated effect on operational requirements) inspect 100% of a unit's aircraft overnight.

(5) The team would not be confined to responsibility for inspections as described. On return to group headquarters they should be held responsible for resolving as many of the unit's problems as possible. In addition, team members should not be above working with the units, as mechanics when required, to correct the conditions they have noted as inspectors.

(6) Thus with discretion, the team could be used as a "maintenance reserve" to be committed to help a particular unit through a heavy work cycle, or to help a unit that's heavily committed operationally.

(7) The team should also be used as a mobile training team to assist units to establish and continue an aggressive OJT program for all mechanics.

(8) In fact, employment of this QA Team would be limited only by the imagination of the maintenance officer, the team members, and the group commander and staff.

Observation:

(1) The commanding Officer of a Combat Aviation Group commands units owning from 400-1000 aircraft. While RVN concepts withholds a large degree of operational control from the Group CO, he is ultimately responsible for all maintenance on these increasingly sophisticated aircraft. To monitor the performance of maintenance on all these aircraft, the commander is provided, by TOE, one aircraft maintenance officer, captain, one aircraft repair technician, WO, one aircraft maintenance supervisor, NCO E-8, two rotary wing technical inspectors, SP6, and one fixed wing technical inspector, SP6. In addition to attempting to stay abreast of the maintenance situation in each unit, this small staff is responsible

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for maintaining the headquarters aircraft, for coordinating the assignment of aircraft and armament systems to all units of the group, coordinating maintenance and supply technical and management problems between units, battalions, the 1st Avn Bde, 34th GS Gp (AM&S), 58th Trans Bn (AMMC) and the supporting Transportation Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Battalion(s) and for advising the commander and staff on maintenance capabilities to support operational plans.

(2) MTOE proposals have recommended upgrading of the maintenance officer's position to the grade of major, however the remainder of the section has been unchanged.

k. ITEM: Requirement for Standardized Recovery Equipment

Discussion.

(1) 34th GS Gp (AM&S) has developed a listing of acceptable equipment and has provided the listing to the field in 34th GS Gp SOP for Aircraft Recovery. That SOP delineates responsibilities for aircraft recoveries within 34th Gp. It recognizes that Gp units must often call upon 1st Avn Bde CH-47 units to provide evacuation airlift, but it doesn't recognize that 1st Avn Bde maintenance detachments often rig the aircraft for evacuation as well.

(2) While the SOP requires that GS units provide rigging equipment to DS units, no provisions are made for providing rigging equipment to 1st Bde maintenance detachments. These detachments must accumulate the necessary equipment as best they can.

(3) A message outlining 17th CAG policies with respect to recovery was dispatched to all assigned battalions on 9 December 1967. Part two of that same message was addressed to 34th GS Gp and requested standardization of rigging equipment, establishment of inspection criteria and intervals, and single-source distribution of recovery equipment. No reply has been received from 34th GS Gp. (Msg AVGD-CD 6188-67, Subject: Aerial Evacuation of Downed Aircraft, dtd 9 December 1967)

Observation: Aerial evacuation of downed aircraft has long been recognized as valid requirement in Vietnam. In spite of this known requirement however, there is no standard rigging equipment available to be used in preparing aircraft for evacuation. The equipment presently in use is generally a makeshift arrangement of clevises, hooks, bolts, nylon webbing, and other improvisations. Equipment required to rig aircraft for aerial evacuation should be standardized and this standardized equipment be provided to 1st Avn Bde units from a single source.

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1. ITEM: Relocation of Maintenance Elements

Discussion: It is often required that an aviation unit deploy from its base field for operations ranging from one week to three months or longer. After analysis of unit performance involving operational performance when maintenance support is provided from base field and when maintenance support accompanies the aviation unit in its deployment the following conclusions have been drawn:

(1) Aviation units are more effective and attain higher availability rates when maintenance elements accompany the unit on deployment.

(2) The point of increased improvement in unit performance appears to be at about 10 days or two weeks, i.e. if a unit deploys for a week, maintenance elements which accompany the move need not be large whereas if the unit is to deploy for two weeks or longer, the unit should be accompanied by a sizeable, well-equipped maintenance element.

(3) In deployments involving one or more movements of this sizeable maintenance element, planning for the movement should be a prime command consideration at all levels.

Observation: This headquarters attributes the high availability rates enjoyed by all 1st Avn Bde units (when compared to other units whose aircraft are maintained by other types of organizations) to one major factor: The proximity and familiarity of sufficient mechanics to the aircraft which they maintain.

6. Signal

a. ITEM: Project ZYR

Discussion: The Project Officer at the retrofit site (ZYR) and the Operations Officer at each unit are the key individuals to provide timely input of aircraft and to insure minimum downtime. Direct Coordination between these individuals will insure best results in the ZYR Program.

Observation: The aircraft avionics retrofit project (ZYR) is operating at a much higher efficiency than ever before. This is due to commanders emphasis and the appointment of project officers.

b. ITEM: Frequency Overlap in Tactical Operations.

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Discussion: All frequencies except HF are assigned to units for local use only, within their AO. Units relocating to new AO's throughout RVN are continuing to utilize assigned frequencies from their old area. This causes unnecessary interference and many problems to all units concerned.

Observation: The TAC SOP of all units should include information concerning frequency coordination and request prior to relocation of a unit to a new AO.

7. Flight Safety

ITEM: RPM Loss Accident Comparison, UH-1D & UH-1H Helicopters

Discussion: The amount of accidents due to loss of RPM have been high in the UH-1 type helicopter. The new UH-1H helicopter was designed to deliver more power. The new L-13 engine, found in the UH-1H, is capable of developing more power than the rotor system can tolerate, and the amount of usable power has been limited by the power train. The pilots would now have sufficient power to lift the combat loads in Vietnam. This logically should reduce or eliminate the accidents in which RPM loss occurred. However a review of the accidents which involved UH-1D and UH-1H helicopters reveals that accidents still occur due to lost RPM. A summary for the last three months is as follows:

	<u>RPM LOSS ACCIDENTS</u>	<u>MODEL</u>
	6	UH-1D
	4	UH-1H
TOTAL	10	

Observation: Increasing the power in the UH-1 helicopter has not significantly affected the accidents caused by loss of RPM. The ratio of H to D models has reversed itself from September 67 to January 68. The present inventory of 17th CAG assets shows 220 UH-1H and 58 UH-1D helicopters. The total number of aircraft accidents due to loss of RPM is relatively the same because the loads have increased proportionately. The pilots have a misconception that the UH-1H helicopter cannot be over loaded because of the extra power developed by the L-13 engine. Many pilots expect instantaneous response to power applications. The slight delay, which is characteristic in the UH-1 series, is enough to bleed RPM down to hazardous conditions which are beyond the capabilities of some pilots.

8. Medical

a. ITEM: Medical Service, Kontum

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Discussion: There is no organic medical section in an aviation company. However, due to the large size of these units, the requirement exists for attached medical support. The OA Medical Detachment is generally employed to satisfy this requirement. With modification these medical units can satisfactorily support two or three aviation companies situated in the same location. In areas where an aviation company is isolated, an OA Medical Detachment is generally attached to the company as its sole user.

Observation: The 57th Assault Helicopter Company is located at Kontum, approximately 20 minutes flying time from the nearest aviation dispensary or medical treatment facility. No OA Medical Detachment is available among 17th Aviation Group assets for attachment to this company. In order to alleviate the situation somewhat, a flight surgeon was attached to the company. He was furnished the absolute minimum of equipment from the assets of the 52d Aviation Battalion to perform his mission. Since his arrival at Kontum, several other non-aviation units in the area have utilized his services such that more than half of the daily sick call is composed of personnel from other units. It is felt that the 57th Assault Helicopter Company can be provided only the basic aviation medical care with these austere facilities. However, the added workload from other units is compromising even this service.

b. ITEM: Mass Casualties, Kontum

Discussion: The organic and attached medical facilities of aviation units in Vietnam have been given the mission to furnish aviation medical care on the outpatient basis. None of these medical units is able to furnish the service necessary to handle combat casualties.

Observation: In a recent attack on the 57th Assault Helicopter Company base camp at Kontum, a significant number of personnel were seriously wounded. Dust-off ships were on the scene within 30 minutes to evacuate patients to the 71st Evacuation Hospital approximately 20 minutes away. The evacuation process required approximately 4 hours, therefore several patients were held and treated at Kontum while awaiting evacuation. It was only because the medical company of the 173d Airborne Brigade was temporarily located adjacent to the 57th AHC at Kontum and their services were utilized that more fatalities did not occur. Several of the more seriously wounded patients were given numerous blood transfusions while awaiting evacuation.

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AVGD-SC

15 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDGLTO CSFOR-65 (U)

Part II Recommendations.

1. (U) Personnel

(None)

2. (C) Operations.

a. Reference Section II Part I para 2b, Recommend that security of airfield in II Corps Tactical Zone be surveyed by IFFV to reevaluate the local conditions and that a higher priority be placed on contingencies to reinforce 17th CAG airfields that come under enemy attack.

b. Reference Section II Part I para 2c, Recommend that continued command interest be stressed on the hazard of operating of Army Aircraft during marginal light conditions.

3. (U) Operations and Training

a. Reference Section II Part I para 3a. Recommend sling load operation be given increased emphasis during unit training and also in service schools to reduce the incidents of dropped sling loads.

b. Reference Section II Part I para 3a(2). Recommend that the feasibility of establishing stringent qualifications for CH-47 mechanic trainees, revising the program of instruction for these mechanics, and development of a specific and definite career pattern for Chinook personnel be seriously studied.

c. Reference Section II Part I para 3b. Recommend that TOE 1-258G be implemented in all CH-47 units and that a study be conducted to determine feasibility of implementing TOE 55-570G to provide third echelon maintenance capability to 7/17 CAV SQDN and to the 201st CAG. (This TOE could also be applied to all aviation units in-country not presently having third echelon capability organic or attached.)

4. (U) Intellegence

(None)

5. (C) Logistics

a. Reference Section II Part I para 5g.

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AVGD-SC

15 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDC1TO CSFOR-65 (U)

Recommend:

(1) That a detailed study of the armament management system, USARV-wide, be conducted.

(2) That consideration be given to arming all float UH-1B's and UH-1C's to permit immediate issue of a mission ready aircraft to replace aircraft requiring extensive maintenance. This armed float fleet could also serve as a reserve fleet for tactical employment when required (in the most extreme circumstances) and would constitute a ready source of aircraft to replace combat losses.

(3) That UH-1B's and UH-1C's not be issued to operating units until weapons systems are installed.

(4) That review of all assigned gunships be conducted to determine whether or not, through exchange of aircraft between units, armed platoons can be brought to standard configuration.

(5) That sufficient weapons systems be procured to insure the continuation of the above recommended policies, consistent with the introduction of new equipment.

b. Reference Section II Part I para 5i.

Recommend that a new tail rotor for the UH-1 be developed, or that the present tail rotor be modified to permit safe extension of the inspection interval or ultimately, elimination of the inspection requirement. That direct exchange stock on UH-1 rotor hubs in each direct support maintenance unit be subjected to intense management, to include projection of requirements from all using elements, as required.

c. Reference Section II Part I para 5j.

Recommend that USARV Configuration Control Program be revised to:

(1) Eliminate all but the most essential MWO's from required compliance listings. Examples of these "most essential" MWO's are the UH-1D aft battery shelf MWO (WO 55-1520-210-20/17) and the particle separator installation, (MWO 55-1520-211-30/35).

(2) Publish the above listing on a quarterly basis.

(3) Recall all issued MWO kits, for MWO's determined to be not absolutely essential, not already applied and withhold issue of kits on

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AVCD-SC

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDCLT CSF R-65 (U)

15 February 1968

hand in DSUs depots. Return all MM kits to COMUS depots or overhaul facilities.

(4) Recommend that all non-essential MM's be applied only in COMUS.

6. (U) Signal

(None)

7. (U) Flight Safety.

a. Reference Section II Part I para 7.

Recommend that an education program be conducted by the supporting units to the supported units on lift capability of the UH-1 type helicopter. That all units be advised that the increased power developed by the new L-13 engine should be left in reserve when emergency conditions exist. That newly assigned pilots be given a thorough in-country checkride to include the proper loading of aircraft and proper pilot techniques to avoid loss of RPM. Recovery procedures must be known by each pilot in case of RPM loss.

8. (U) Medical

a. Reference Section II Part I para 8a.

Recommend that an A Medical Detachment be attached to the 57th Assault Helicopter Company as soon as possible so that the necessary aviation medical care may be provided.

b. Reference Section II Part I para 8b.

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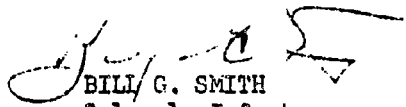
AVGD-SC

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDCLTO CSFOR-65 (U)

15 February 1968

Recommend that consideration be given to assigning a medical unit from the assets of 44th Medical Brigade to the Kontum area for such situations as long as the possibility of future significant action exists.

8 Incl
as



BILL G. SMITH
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

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AVFA-GC-OT (13 Feb 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending
31 January 1968 RCS CSFOR-65 UIC DCIAAA 17th CAG (U)

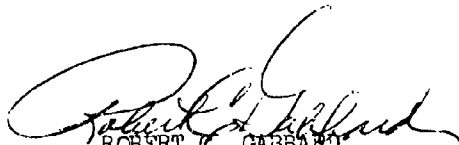
HEADQUARTERS, I FIELD FORCE VIETNAM, APO 96350

5 MAR 1968

TO: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96307

Concur.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


ROBERT C. GABBARD
1LT, AGC
Asst. Adjutant General

Copies furnished:

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AVBA-C (13 Feb 68) 2nd Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending
31 January 1968 RCS CSFOR-65 UIC WDCITO (U)

MAR 20 1968

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE, APO 96384

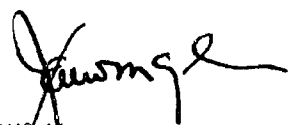
THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DST, APO 96375
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, DA (ACSFOR DA),
Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed subject report of the 17th Combat Aviation Group, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents.

2. (C) The following additional comment is considered pertinent: Section II, Part 1, para 8a and b, page 29: The present medical resources of the 1st Avn Bde do not allow for the placement of an OA detachment at Kontum. However, additional OA detachments are programmed for RVN and a detachment should arrive in Kontum by the end of the fiscal year. Coordination with the Surgeon of I MTFV to provide medical support to the non-aviation personnel at Kontum is continuing.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


JAMES M. GOLDMANN
Assistant Adjutant General

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

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AVHGC-DST (15 Feb 68) 3d Ind (C) CPT Arnold/ms/LBN 4485
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDC1TO CSFOR-65 (U)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 7 APR 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 31 January 1968 from Headquarters, 17th Combat Aviation Group as indorsed.

2. (C) Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning security of 17th CAG airfields in II Corps Tactical Zone, page 13, paragraph 2b. No action on this matter can be indicated until the manpower survey is approved at USARPAC. Recommend early approval of the manpower survey in light of the seriousness of existing situation due to the shortage of personnel to provide security.

b. Reference item concerning dropped loads, page 14, paragraph 3a(1). This subject was covered as an item in the 1st Aviation Brigade Commander's notes in January 1968.

c. Reference item concerning qualification of Chinook mechanics, MOS 67U20 and 67U30, page 15, paragraph 3a(2); and page 31, paragraph 3c. Unclassified message AVHAV-OPT 38755, Subj; EM Aviation Personnel Functional Training, was dispatched to all major headquarters on 2 March 1968. The essential element was the request for comments on type training desired by MOS to increase individual proficiency. When complete information is received, a report will be submitted to CONARC.

d. Reference item concerning implementation of approved TOE, page 16, paragraph 3b; and page 31, paragraph 3c. TOE 1-258G has been included as part of Phase II Standardization and will be implemented as soon as DA approval for the plan is received. Implementation of TOE 55-570G is dependent on availability of spaces within the space ceiling to meet the increased personnel authorization.

e. Reference item concerning lack of aircraft maintenance facilities, page 20, paragraph 5e.

(1) Maintenance hangars for the following location have been programmed in the 69R RVN Construction scheme for I and II CTZs:

DA NANG	HUE/PHU BAI
CHU LAI	CAMP HOLLOWAY
DRAGON MOUNTAIN	AN KHE
TUY HOA	

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

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AVHGC-DST (15 Feb 68) 3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDC1TO CSFOR-65 (U)

(2) Although the funds for the above projects may become available in 2d quarter FY 69, the maintenance hangars are not on hand and construction cannot be started until the necessary items have been received from CONUS.

f. Reference item concerning management of aircraft armament systems, page 22, paragraph 5g.

(1) Unclassified USARV message AVHAV-LOG 91245, DTG 120850Z Dec 67, established USARV policy for the replacement of sub-systems. Proper application of this policy by the 17th CAG will insure timely replacement of required armament.

(2) A study of armament management is not required. The established system, if properly implemented by the subordinate commands of the 1st Aviation Brigade, will provide a timely supply of appropriate armament systems. The arming of float aircraft is not practical for the following reasons:

(a) Sufficient armament systems are not available.

(b) All float aircraft must be available for issue to any unit. When a particular armament system is installed, it restricts the flexibility of the float aircraft.

(3) A recommendation will be made to the 1st Aviation Brigade that a meeting be held to discuss all aspects of the armament program with the 1st Aviation Brigade subordinate units.

g. Reference item concerning UH-1 tail rotor hub inspection, page 23, paragraph 5h. USARV is now conducting a study of 300 selected UH-1Bs to establish a new inspection criteria or time interval. The manufacturer is also in the process of developing a new tail rotor yoke.

h. Reference item concerning configuration control program for aircraft modifications, page 24, paragraph 5i; and page 32, paragraph 5c: Each MWO should be studied individually. If, in the opinion of the unit maintenance officer, the MWO should not be applied, justification for such action should be forwarded through channels to this headquarters.

i. Reference item concerning requirement for standardized recovery equipment, page 27, paragraph 5k. USARV Regulation 750-16 is being revised to include new procedures involving recovery of aircraft.

j. Reference item concerning RPM loss accident comparison, page 29, paragraph 7: Concur. The purpose of the "additional power" provided in the UH-1H is widely misunderstood. The aircraft is not intended to carry a greater load than the UH-1D; rather, it is meant to provide the same lift capability on a hot day as was previously possible in a D model on a standard day and at

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AVHGC-DST (15 Feb 68) 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968
UIC WDC1TO CSFOR-65 (U)

sea level. More commanders and aircrews need to be educated to the fact that UH-1H will be able to transport the same number of troops throughout the day with much less regard to temperature or altitude, and that the max gross weight (9500 lbs) is the same on both aircraft. USARV Aviation Section will publish an information sheet to supplement the UH-1H article appearing in the Feb-Mar USARV Aviation Pamphlet.

3. (U) Correct Unit Identification Code is WDC1AA.

4. (U) A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER


C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Copies furnished:
HQ 17th Cbt Avn Gp
HQ 1st Avn Bde

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GPOP-DT (15 Feb 68) (U) 4th Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 17th Cbt Avn Gp for Period Ending
31 January 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 10 MAY 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


C.I. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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STATION LIST
17TH AVIATION GP - ASSIGNED - ATTACHED
(as of 31 Jan 68)

UNIT	LOC	REMARKS
HQ, 17th Cbt Avn Gp	NHA TRANG	
HHC, 17th Cbt Avn Gp	NHA TRANG	
201st Corps Avn Co	NHA TRANG	
<hr/>		
10th Cbt Avn Bn	DONG BA THIN	
HHC	DONG BA THIN	
150th Med Det	DONG BA THIN	
339th Avn Det	DONG BA THIN	
61st Aslt Hel Co	AN SON (Lane AAF)	
92d Aslt Hel Co	DONG BA THIN	
192d Aslt Hel Co	DONG BA THIN	
196th Aslt Spt Hel Co	AN SON (Lane AAF)	
243d Aslt Spt Hel Co	DONG BA THIN	
281st Aslt Hel Co	NHA TRANG	
<hr/>		
52d Cbt Avn Bn	PLEIKU	
HHC	PLEIKU	
52d Security Plt	PLEIKU	
68th Inf Det (Radar)	PLEIKU	
344th Avn Opn Det	PLEIKU	

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UNIT	LOC
<u>57th Aslt Hel Co****</u>	KONTUM
822d SC Det	KONTUM
615th TC Det	KONTUM
<u>119th Aslt Hel Co</u>	PLEIKU
70th SC Det (Avionics)	PLEIKU
34th Med Det	PLEIKU
545th TC Det (Heptr FM)	PLEIKU
<u>155th Aslt Hel Co</u>	BAN ME THUOT
8th Med Det	BAN ME THUOT
165th TC Det (Heptr FM)	BAN ME THUOT
208th SC Det (Avionics)	BAN ME THUOT
255th QM Det (Petr)	BAN ME THUOT
<u>170th Aslt Hel Co</u>	PLEIKU
405th TC Det (Heptr FM)	PLEIKU
448th SC Det (Avionics)	PLEIKU
755th Med Det	PLEIKU
<u>179th Aslt Spt Hel Co</u>	PLEIKU
402d TC Det (Heptr FM)	PLEIKU
<u>189th Aslt Hel Co</u>	PLEIKU
6th SC Det (Avionics)	PLEIKU
604th TC Det (Heptr FM)	PLEIKU
<u>355th Hvy Hel Co</u>	PLEIKU
662 Trans Det	PLEIKU
<u>223d Cbt Spt Avn Bn</u>	QUI NHON
HHO	QUI NHON
343d Avn Op Det	QUI NHON
<u>18th Util Airpl Co</u>	QUI NHON
163d Med Det	QUI NHON
256th TC Det (Acft RR KD)	QUI NHON
<u>183d Recon Airpl Co</u>	DONG B. THIN
<u>185th Recon Airpl Co</u>	BAN ME THUOT
<u>203d Recon Airpl Co ****</u>	PHU HIEP
<u>219th Recon Airpl Co</u>	PLEIKU
<u>225th Survl Airpl Co</u>	PHU HIEP
589th TC Det (JD)	PHU HIEP
821st SC Det (RL)	PHU HIEP

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268th Cbt Avn Bn

HHC

342d AOD

48th Aslt Hel Co

279th SC Det (RL)

286th Med Det (OA)

390th TC Det (KD)

129th Aslt Hel Co

296th SC Det (RL)

394th TC Det (KD)

433d Med Det (OA)

134th Aslt Hel Co

832d SC Det

618th TC Det

180th Aslt Spt Hel Co

403d TC Det

335th Aslt Hel Co

166th TC Det

234th SC Det

25th Med Det

PHU HIEP

PHU HIEP

PHU HIEP

NINH HOA

NINH HOA

NINH HOA

NINH HOA

AN SON

AN SON

AN SON

AN SON

PHU HIEP

PHU HIEP

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PHU HIEP

PHU HIEP

PHU HIEP

PHU HIEP

PHU HIEP

7th Sqdn, 17th Cav

Hq & Hq Troop

40th TC Det

TROOP "A", 7/17 Cav

TROOP "B", 7/17 Cav

TROOP "C", 7/17 Cav

TROOP "D", 7/17 Cav

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

DRAGON MOUNTAIN

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Operational Data for Quarterly Period Ending 31 Jan 68

TYPE A/C	NO. ASGD	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO (Tons)	HOURS
CH-47	62	46699	154990	62762	15442
O-1	102	23324	271	--	29607
U-6	3	650	3	--	493
U-1A	16	4016	10180	299	2868
OV-1	12	2522	--	--	5193
OH-23			--	--	
OH-6	20	4943	--	--	3313
U-21	6	1268	3171	53	1116
UH-1	394	365544	470714	17649	103728
TOTAL	615	449,066	639,329	80,763	161,770

VC KBA	STRUCTURES		SAMPANS		CAS EVAC
	DAM	DES	DAM	DES	
1236	1011	2055	140	382	2444

ORDNANCE EXPENDED				
7.62 MM	5.56 MM	2.75 IN	.50 CAL	40 MM
12,484,398	20,649	179,457		149,114

COMBAT		LOSSES		OPERATIONAL	
TYPE A/C	LOSS	DAM	LOSS	DAM	
UH-1B,C	10	66	1	3	
UH-1D,H	23	134	7	23	
CH-47		14	1		
O-1	1	34	2	1	
U-6		1			
U-1A				1	
OV-1		3			
OH-23					
OH-6		8	1		

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PERSONNEL CASUALTY STATISTICS

	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASG</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>
HQ, 17th CAG					
NOV	144	187	0	0	0
DEC	144	209	0	0	0
JAN	86	222	0	0	0
10TH CAB					
NOV	1896	1826	0	2	0
DEC	1896	1771	0	9	0
JAN	1879	1799	0	8	0
14th CAB					
NOV	1650	1455	All casualty		
DEC	1802	1482	Reports transferred		
JAN	Reassigned to 16th CAG		to Americal Division		
52d CAB					
NOV	1194	1823	2	13	1
DEC	1994	1867	2	2	0
JAN	2272	2045	7	79	0
201st AVN CO (Corps)					
NOV	115	125	0	0	0
DEC	115	121	0	0	0
JAN	115	114	0	0	0
212th CSAB					
NOV	1251	1126	0	3	0
DEC	1251	1119	1	0	0
JAN	Reassigned to 16th CAG				
23d CSAB					
NOV	1209	1018	1	1	0
DEC	1209	1028	0	0	0
JAN	1217	1105	0	0	0
268th CAB					
NOV	1666	1530	0	2	0
DEC	1666	1472	0	4	4
JAN	1627	1449	0	9	0

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7th Sqdn/17th Cav

NOV	838	877	0	2	0
DEC	838	952	1	3	0
JAN	838	761	1	25	1

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PERCENTAGE OF PRESENT FOR DUTY STRENGTH OF AUTHORIZED AVIATORS

	NOV	DEC	JAN
10th CAB	78	80	80
14TH CAB	85	69	Reassigned to 16th CAG
52d CAB	80	76	80
212th CAB	72	76	Reassigned to 16th CAG
223d CSAB	76	81	83
268th CAB	72	70	70
7/17 AC	88	88	88

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 17TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP
APO San Francisco 96240

AVGD-SC

20 December 1967

SUBJECT: Staff Study

TO: Commanding General
1st Aviation Brigade
APO 96384

1. PROBLEM: To determine if there is an increased capability on the part of the enemy to destroy aircraft by ground fire through increased efficiency or employment of larger caliber weapons.

2. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM:

- a. The period considered was 1 Jun - 16 Dec 67.
- b. 546 aircraft were hit during the period.
- c. 61 aircraft were downed as a result of ground fire.
- d. Total number of bullet strikes was 1051.
- ee. 836 of the strikes were 30 caliber (7.62).
- f. 210 of the strikes were 50 caliber.
- g. 7 were larger caliber strikes. (4 20mm, 3 a/c hit by mortars in LZ).
- h. Data pertains to 17th CAG a/c only.

3. DISCUSSION:

a. Available information was analysed in an attempt to answer the following questions:

- (1) Is the total number of aircraft hit per 1000 hours flown increasing?
- (2) Is the ratio of aircraft hit per aircraft shot at increasing?
- (3) Are more aircraft being forced down per given number of aircraft struck?

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AVGD-3C

20 December 1967

SUBJECT: Staff Study

(4) Is there an increase in the use of 50 caliber weapons by enemy forces?

(5) Is there any pattern in the location of 50 caliber weapons on the ground?

(6) Is the hit density closely related to ground combat engagements?

b. Aircraft hit per 1000 flying hours. The number of aircraft hit per 1000 hours flown is plotted on Chart 1. Although the monthly experience fluctuates up and down during the period of June through December 15, there is a slight but definite upward trend. No single factor causing this trend is apparent. It may be a result of increased capability on the part of the enemy, but may also be a result of more intense ground combat, particularly in the Chu Lai area.

c. Aircraft hit per aircraft shot at. A comparison of the aircraft hit per 100 aircraft shot at on a monthly basis is plotted on Chart 2 and indicates a definite increase in the accuracy of enemy gunners. However, the accuracy of the input data is questionable. The ability of the individual to ascertain that he has been shot at (when not hit) varies and the consistency with which all pilots report and record "shot at" is also questionable. The effect of these two factors can assumed to be constant, however, so the trend is probably valid, showing an increased accuracy on the part of enemy gunners. The S-2 of the 14th CAB reported that in a review of hit data conducted several months ago for the period August - October, the majority of aircraft hits were located forward of the gunner/crewchief stations, indicating an increase in the accuracy of enemy gunners. He also indicated that enemy gunners of 50 caliber weapons appeared to be trained considerably better than the individual firing 30 caliber type weapons. He further indicated an increased number of hits against single aircraft missions. These findings were not specifically noted by other 17th CAG battalions.

d. Aircraft downed per aircraft struck. The number of aircraft forced down because of combat damage per 100 aircraft struck is plotted on Chart 3. Although the month of October was considerably lower than other months, there is a slight upward trend from June to December in the number of aircraft downed per 100 aircraft hit. This would tend to indicate an increased capability on the part of enemy gunners.

e. Use of 50 caliber weapons. Charts 4 and 5 indicate an increase in both the total number of aircraft hit and the total number of bullet strikes. This is coupled with an increase in flying hours. The ratio of 30 caliber hits to 50 caliber hits remains fairly constant, however, with 30 caliber hits representing 70% to 90% of the total hits throughout this 6 month period. There is only a slight trend towards a higher percentage of hits by 50 caliber weapons.

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AVGD-SC
SUBJECT: Staff Study

20 December 1967

f. Pattern in location of 50 caliber weapons. Although there is a slight random hit experience throughout the I and II Corps Tactical Zones from 50 caliber weapons, the heaviest concentration appears to be associated with the 2d NVA Division in the Chu Lai area. No other significant concentration is apparent.

g. Hit density relationship to ground action.

(1) It would seem obvious that the hit density would be related to ground combat engagements, but the degree to which it is related is imprecise. The accompanying map board has one pin plotted for each 17th Group aircraft hit, at the geographical location of the hit. This map board reflects an accurate picture of hit experience in the I and II Corps Tactical Zone with the exception that it does not include 1st Cavalry Division data nor does it include data for such units as the 335th AHC from 12th CAG working in the I and II Corps Tactical Zones.

(2) Although there is a slight random hit experience throughout the area, each heavy concentration of hits can be related to a specific major ground action. Beginning in June, the major hit pattern was in the Duc Pho area where elements of Task Force Oregon (TFO) supported by the 14th CAB were heavily engaged with NVA units. In July the action continued around Duc Pho and picked up to the north of Quang Ngai. In August the major ground action shifted west of Chu Lai, again with TFO supported by the 14th CAB heavily engaged with the 2d NVA Division. Action continued in this area throughout September, gradually tapering off towards October, November, and December. In September the hit pattern picked up in the vicinity of Tuy Hoa where the 268th CAB was in support of the 173d ABN BDE and the 9th ROK Division in Operation Bolling. In late October and early November, the hit density was significant in the Ninh Hoa area where the 9th ROK Division engaged a number of company size forces in the immediate vicinity of Ninh Hoa. In late November and early December the hit pattern picked up significantly in the Dak To area where the 4th Infantry Division and 173d Airborne Brigade were heavily engaged with the NVA.

4. CONCLUSIONS:

a. There is an upward trend in the number of aircraft hit per 1000 flying hours.

b. There appears to be a trend towards increased accuracy on the part of enemy gunners.

c. There is a slight upward trend in the number of aircraft forced down per 100 aircraft hit.

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AVGD-SC

20 December 1967

SUBJECT: Staff Study

d. There is a very slight increase in the percentage of hits by 50 caliber weapons.

e. The only significant concentration of 50 caliber anti-aircraft fire is associated with the 2d NVA Division vicinity Chu Lai.

f. The density of ground fire is closely related to the intensity of ground combat engagements.

/s/Bill G. Smith
/t/BILL G. SMITH
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS I FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
APO SAN Francisco 96350

AVFA-AV

10 January 1968

SUBJECT: Aircraft Accidents

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Helicopter operations at night in Vietnam are considered more hazardous than in other areas of the world. This is due primarily to the adverse weather conditions, rugged terrain and the lack of a full network of navigational aids. During the past two months there have been four aircraft accidents with a total of fourteen deaths, all of which occurred at night on routine administrative missions. In all cases marginal weather was a contributing factor.

2. To reduce the probability of accidents of this nature, scheduling of purely administrative helicopter flight should take maximum advantage of daylight and good weather conditions. User planning should envision start and return times that allow for all travel to be completed during daylight hours including travel to and from point of origin of the aircraft. Termination of flights at the home base in this manner permits maintenance to be performed during daylight hours.

3. While this letter is not intended to restrict night helicopter flights of an emergency or tactical nature, it is the desire of this headquarters that commanders insure adequate review of flight schedules so as to limit night helicopter flights to those approved as mission essential.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

/s/George S. Blanchard
/t/GEORGE S. BLANCHARD
Brigadier General, USA
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION:

CG, ROKFV FC
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CO, 5th SFGA
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SP LNO ROKFV FC

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The following is a translation of an LOI published by ROKFVFC, 12 Dec 1967.

SUBJECT: LETTER OF INSTRUCTION ON HELICOPTERS

1. There are insufficient helicopters to perform all support missions requested by FVMAF's in Vietnam. Therefore it is imperative that all units receiving helicopter support understand the technical problems associated with helicopter operations. This knowledge will insure the best utilization of the available helicopters.
2. All helicopters require frequent mechanical inspections to insure safe operations. It is important that helicopters return to their home base when not actually flying a mission so that maintenance personnel may work on them. Any helicopter standing by for a mission should be at its home base if possible to enable mechanics to maintain it. This is a particularly serious problem with CH-47 helicopters since many hours of maintenance are expended for each hour of flying time. Retaining a helicopter standby for a possible mission could result in that aircraft not being mission ready at a future time during a tactical emergency situation.
3. In order to insure proper utilization and maximum availability of helicopters the following policies are established:
 - a. Whenever possible utilize ground transportation to conduct routine operations. Reserve helicopters for combat missions and resupply for isolated units.
 - b. Obtain sufficient sling equipment to preclude internal loading of supplies. Prepare the sling loads before requesting helicopter support so that flying time is not wasted. Loading of water cans and ammunition boxes internally is not efficient since it uses helicopter time while the aircraft sits on the ground. Special water containers (FSN 8110-900-8328) are available for helicopter use. Optimum sling loads for the UH-1D is 1000 lbs and 6000 lbs for the CH-47.
 - c. Insure that helicopter gunship pilots are thoroughly knowledgeable of the tactical situation and receive explicit instructions on their mission. Do not assign missions of a general nature as these type usually are not successful.
 - d. Insure that all helipads are prepared on level ground with no obstacles. Fences, wires, antennae, and other objects within 100 feet of the helipad create undue hazards for the crew of the helicopter. Conduct daily inspections of helipads to insure removal of any loose material. The helicopter can blow loose items injuring people or damaging the helicopter. Pilots are instructed to refuse to land when there is a hazardous condition at the heliport. Every helipad must have a wind sock, flag, or ground personnel must employ a smoke grenade. Direction and velocity of wind is important information for the pilot especially near mountain tops.

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e. Advise all ground troops that the rotor blade on a UH-1D helicopter can dip as low as 5 feet 2 inches above the ground. The tail rotor is also very dangerous. Vehicles should not be driven closer than 100 feet to a running helicopter. The engine exhaust on the rear of a OH-47 is hot enough to seriously burn a person.

f. Carefully plan all helicopter missions to insure that helicopters are not flying empty or being sent from one resupply point to another searching for loads. This can be accomplished easily if ground units prepare their supplies in sling loads and then call for supporting helicopters.

4. The policies outlined above will be beneficial to both ground and aviation unit commanders in that utilization of helicopter support will improve and there will be more time to perform maintenance.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 17TH COMBAT AVIATION GROUP
APO San Francisco 96240

AVGD-MS

4 December 1967

SUBJECT: Request for Comments on Proposed ORLL Item

TO: Commanding Officer, 10th Combat Aviation Battalion, APO 96377
Commanding Officer, 14th Combat Aviation Battalion, APO 96374
Commanding Officer, 52d Combat Aviation Battalion, APO 96318
Commanding Officer, 268th Combat Aviation Battalion, APO 96316

1. Attached is a copy of an ORLL Item which may be submitted in February 1968 report. The item deals with the quality of Chinook mechanics being received through the pipeline.

2. Request this item be reviewed by your CH-47 units and comments provided this Headquarters concerning the following:

- a. Validity of the item.
- b. Benefit of the Vertol team.
- c. Comment on proposals made, particularly on "feel" for feasibility of the proposals.
- d. Discuss present CH-47 training program of instruction with course graduates and determine, if possible, specific areas of that POI that should be eliminated, lengthened, or otherwise improved.
- e. Comment on expanded and much more specialized training for Chinook maintenance supervisors and maintenance officers.

3. Reply should be received by this Headquarters not later than 31 Dec 67.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
as

/s/ A. H. Kraph II
/t/ A. H. KRAF II
Major, Infantry
Adjutant

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AVGD-AJ (4 Dec 67) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Request for Comments on Proposed ORLL Item

HEADQUARTERS 10TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION, APO 96377

TO: Commanding Officer, 17th Combat Aviation Group, ATTN: AVGD-MS,
APO 96240

The following is a list of comments concerning the proposed ORLL item:

a. Validity of the Item: There is no doubt that this item is most valid. The level of experience of the average 67U20 or 67U30 is very low. This is due, of course, to the fact that most mechanic replacements are first tour enlisted men with very little time in service or in Army aviation.

b. Benefit of Vertol Team: As this battalion has never received the help of the Vertol Team, it is not possible to comment on their actual benefit to a unit. However, it is understood that in units that did receive help from the Vertol Team, that the personnel were used on the line working on aircraft and not in a supervisory or instructor position. This is an indication that they helped more to fill the gap left by shortages of personnel rather than being used for their instructional ability.

c. "Feel" for Feasibility of Proposals: The feasibility of proposals made is within reason. There can be no doubt that mechanics with prior experience on other aircraft and with more service time would make better CH-47A mechanics. Also, once trained, these men should by all means remain in the Chinook program. It also should be noted, however, that Chinook units in the Republic of Vietnam should be kept at higher percentage of fill as far as 67U30, 67U20, 67U40 and 67Z40 MOS's are concerned. With the high amount of maintenance man hours required for each flying hour of the CH-47A, it is imperative that the unit be kept at full strength in the maintenance area.

d. CH-47A Training Program of Instruction: The training program of instruction offered at Fort Eustis is adequate. Training could be made a little more detailed in areas of SAS, minor engine adjustments, electrical systems and the auxiliary power unit. However, no big change in the program is required. The answer to the problem is not in the schooling but in the actual experience on the line where various problems are encountered and solved. If inexperienced and young mechanics are continued to be graduated from the Chinook Mechanics Course. They should be assigned for a short period of time to CONUS CH-47A training units in order to gain this on-the-job experience. After a few months in this kind of assignment they could be sent to the Republic of Vietnam with greater expectation from their job performance. The key, however, is to keep individuals in the CH-47 program and not sidetrack them to other assignments where their training and experience are of no value.

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AVGD-AJ (4 Dec 67)

1st Ind

SUBJECT: Request for Comments on Proposed ORLL Item

30 December 1967

e. More Training for CH-47 Maintenance Supervisors and Maintenance Officers: Every CH-47 maintenance supervisor should have attended either the CH-47 course at Fort Eustis or one of the various AOTAP schools now in existence. This is to give them a basic knowledge in this particular aircraft. However, they are still supervisors and not wrench turners. Their job is to organize and supervise the work, and this is basically the same on any aircraft in the Army inventory. In addition all maintenance officers should be required to attend the maintenance test pilot course at Fort Eustis.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

/s/ Earl H. Talley
/t/ EARL H. TALLEY
Major, Infantry
Adjutant

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 14TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO San Francisco 96274

AVGD-BA

29 December 1967

SUBJECT: Comments on Proposed ORLL Item

TO: Commanding Officer
17th Combat Aviation Group
ATTN: Adjutant
APO 96240

1. Reference Ltr, 17th Combat Aviation Group, dated 4 December 1967,
Subject as above.

2. ORLL Item comments are submitted as Inclosures 1 and 2.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

/s/ Norman H. Holt Jr.
/t/ NORMAN H. HOLT JR.
Captain, Artillery
Adjutant

2 Incl
as

Incl 2 to Incl 8

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PROPOSED ORLL TPA COMMENTS

1. There is no question that the item is valid in its' general concept. This unit concurs with the statement that newly trained maintenance personnel do not have the necessary qualification to perform satisfactorily. The CH-47 is a difficult helicopter to maintain. A minimum of 6-8 weeks OJT is required before the graduate is productive.

2. Comments concerning the benefit of the Vertol Team based solely on unit availability rates cannot be adequately supported by this unit. The over all value of the Vertol Team is not debated. The recent AMTAP team visit was appreciated. However, their effectiveness was severely hampered by operational commitments. Availability of the CH-47 is determined by too many factors, to say with sufficient justification, the Vertol Team improved the availability rate of this company. The AMTAP team must be considered as an invaluable tool used by the commander to improve maintenance quality and personnel training.

3. All proposals made by the item are excellent and, when adopted, would do much to improve the over all posture of the Chinook program. However, the majority of these are long range proposals and will require study and decision at the highest level. As an interim measure, the following is recommended:

a. Authorize units to receive replacements 6-8 weeks prior to the departure of rotating personnel (overlap time).

b. Notification of anticipated losses could be furnished to G-1 by authorizing units to list, as excess, those 67U's with a DMR05 of less than 120 days. (This proposal is based on the valid assumption that a recent graduate can be adequately trained by the unit within 6-8 weeks after assignment).

4. It is agreed that many maintenance officers and maintenance supervisors are "new" to the Chinook field. However, the 6-8 week overlap procedure can be used to off-set their inexperience also.

5. The most frequent comment heard from course graduates is that the program of instruction did not include sufficient practical work. Too much time was spent on theory and not enough on application. Another general comment made was the experience from the field (i.e. common problem area, trouble shooting, etc) was not included in the classroom instruction. One man made the following statement which is rather revealing. He said that he was told, "Everyone who starts the course is going to graduate one way or the other, regardless of score, attitude or effort." This unit recently received 5 replacements from Ft. Eustis. Upon checking their graduation date from the 67U course, it was determined that they were graduated more than 6 months ago. When asked where they had been, they stated that they first worked as carpenters on a building project. Then, 2 went to work as stevedores with the school and the other one went to work as a clerk typist. Perhaps, a better personnel management procedure is needed for Chinook maintenance personnel.

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(CONTINUED)

PROPOSED ORILL ITEM COMMENTS

6. In summation, this unit goes on record as supporting further specialization of Chinook trained personnel. The complexity of this helicopter is such that the army can ill afford the rapid turn-over and continual training of new personnel. Every effort must be made to use Vietnam Veterans in the CONUS Sustaining Increment (CSI) at the 4 locations in CONUS where there are Chinook units or activities. Overstaffing of TOE and TD (USAAVNS and Ft. Eustis) activities is only a temporary solution. Permanent solutions can come with TOE upgrading and re-distribution of world-wide Chinook resources upon termination of RVN activities.

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Proposed ORLL Comments

The following comments are submitted for your consideration in reference to the basic letter. These comments were compiled by the Battalion S-3 section in addition to the subordinate unit's reply on this subject. Because they are timely and cogent to the problem posed by the basic document the following comments are submitted:

a. Supervisors ideally should come from the ranks for many reasons. To train a senior NCO, E6 or E7, to fill a key maintenance slot is a disservice to the system and to the NCO because he does not have the necessary background or experience to adequately prepare him for the problems he will be faced with of technical nature. An MOS school can prepare a man to fill a maintenance slot after he has served a period of time in an OJT status. An NCO does not have the time nor is the opportunity available to him to do this. Coincidental to this also is the fact that by bringing in neophyte supervisory personnel the promotion potential for the career minded personnel is stifled not to mention the effects on the morale of these men. Obviously this program is brought about out of necessity. However, expediency should not negate the fact that this is not the method by which the system was designed to operate in developing senior NCO talent.

b. Recommendations:

(1) That OJT type training be increased in the POI for the enlisted maintenance course.

(2) That supervisory positions in the CH-47 companies be filled with personnel who have come up through the maintenance ranks whenever possible.

(3) That a maintenance officers course specifically for officers assigned as CH-47 maintenance officers be established at the CONUS aviation training bases.

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to
Incl 8

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